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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7727th meeting
Wednesday, 29 June 2016, 10.15 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gimolieca
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Spain	Mr. De la Calle García
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2016/498)

Letter dated 20 June 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/550)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2016/498)

Letter dated 20 June 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2016/550)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Mali to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I warmly welcome His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Diop, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and African Integration of Mali, who is joining today's meeting via video-teleconference from Bamako.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2016/576, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the following countries: Angola, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/498, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali. I wish also to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/550, which contains a letter dated 20 June 2016 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, China, Egypt, France, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Senegal, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in French*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2295 (2016).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to welcome Minister Dioup. I reiterate that Egypt stands ready to cooperate with Council members to provide assistance and support to the people of Mali so as to overcome the current challenges at this critical juncture of Mali's history. We will spare no effort to strengthen regional and international cooperation so as to confront the threats that are facing the people of Mali.

Resolution 2295 (2016), which we have just adopted and of which Egypt is proud to be a sponsor, takes into consideration the critical situation on the ground and the emerging and unique challenges that are facing the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Unfortunately, MINUSMA has become one of the most dangerous operations on the ground. The resolution contains numerous elements that take into consideration the situation on the ground without undermining the necessary requirements of peace operations according to agreed standards.

The resolution gives MINUSMA a balanced mandate in line with current challenges. It strengthens the capacities of Blue Helmets so as to enable them to better protect the Mission, fully discharge their mandate, including the protection of civilians, and provide the necessary assistance and support to the Malian Government and other parties so as to implement the provisions of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation.

I commend the French delegation's efforts aimed at reaching a consensus-based agreement and resolution, in the light of the shared objectives of our delegations. Indeed, the French delegation was able to close certain gaps in terms of fulfilling those objectives.

In conclusion, Egypt would once again like to stress the need to preserve our relationships with our partners in Mali in order to provide them with the international,

regional and bilateral support they require. We believe that stability in Mali is the cornerstone of peace, well-being and prosperity in the Sahel region, whose proximity to North and West Africa directly links it to the stability of the African continent in general.

Mr. Ilichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation voted in favour of resolution 2295 (2016), given the importance of maintaining unanimous Security Council support for the peace process in Mali and the actions of peacekeepers in the country. In so doing, we have taken into account the aspirations of the Government of Mali, which is seeking to accelerate the stabilization of the country's northern territories. We remain concerned, however, that peacekeepers there are risking their lives as they have become targets for terrorists. We express our deepest condolences to the Governments of countries whose nationals have died in fulfilling their duties in service to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

At the same time, in the course of negotiating the text of the resolution, some delegations tried to take advantage of the situation by imposing certain ambiguous language into the MINUSMA mandate. We feel it necessary to express our concern about the vague references in the text to the level of asymmetric threats that would justify the use of force. We will leave the burden of responsibility for that imposition to the conscience of the informal coordinators of the Mali dossier, who once again have abused their position and demonstratively disregarded the views of their colleagues.

Our position is that the relative flexibility that has been given to MINUSMA — and the possibility of the use of force — means that peacekeepers still have to act on the basis of peacekeeping principles. The use of force should only be considered if a serious threat has been assessed. Erroneous strikes against civilians carry additional risks and could lead to threats to the Blue Helmets themselves, thereby endangering the peace process as a whole.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay voted in favour of resolution 2295 (2016) to renew the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), convinced of the importance of ensuring the continuity of the crucial work the peacekeeping operation is doing on Mali. It is clear that we have to work to improve the security conditions of the Mission, since the security of the peacekeeping personnel affects the effectiveness of the Mission in fulfilling its mandate, in force generation and in its task of protecting civilians.

MINUSMA is the peacekeeping operations that has had the sad record of the largest number of peacekeepers to have lost their lives as a result of direct attacks. Given that scenario, there can be no doubt that it must be a priority to improve the security of the personnel deployed in MINUSMA, not only in order to prevent further losses, but also for the Mission to be able to better fulfil its mandate.

The United Nations peacekeeping personnel is being deployed in increasingly complex situations. The use of terrorist tactics, also known as asymmetrical tactics, represent serious threats to the safety of civilians — and of peacekeepers, giving rise to the need for additional tools to allow them to effectively protect civilians. Now, within the need to adapt to the terrorist threat, for Uruguay, peacekeeping operations, owing to their composition and character, are not suited to engage in military counter-terrorism operations. In the cases where asymmetrical threats are present in the operational environment peacekeeping operations must of course adopt security measures, in particular to protect United Nations personnel and civilians.

Through today's resolution, the Security Council has this year allowed MINUSMA to adopt a more proactive and firmer posture in carrying out its mandate. Sub-paragraph (d) of paragraph 19, on countering asymmetrical attacks in active defence of MINUSMA's mandate, calls for engaging direct operations pursuant to serious and credible threats. In the opinion of my delegation, the proactive nature of a peacekeeping operation should not lead to preventive actions or attacks when it comes to fighting terrorism because that would be changing the nature and meaning of what a peacekeeping operation actually is.

I would very briefly like to quote the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, "the Panel believes that United Nations troops should not undertake military counter-terrorism operations" (*S/2015/446, summary*). The report continues,

> "[w]here a parallel force is engaged in offensive combat operations it is important for United Nations peacekeeping operations to maintain a clear division of labour and distinction of roles" (*ibid.*).

Likewise, the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations states,

> "[a]s the Panel rightly recognizes, United Nations peace operations are not the appropriate tool for military counter-terrorism operations" (*S/2015/682, para. 15*).

Even though Uruguay voted in favour of resolution 2295 (2016), it would like to state that we do not feel it is appropriate to mandate MINUSMA, or any other peacekeeping operation, to carry out military counter-terrorist activities or to fight asymmetrical threats.

Finally, Uruguay wishes to point out that the type of mandate adopted in today's resolution is of an extraordinary nature, given the very particular situation that MINUSMA is facing on the ground. The solution it provides does not mean that it can be transferred to other peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Ciss (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I would like to start by expressing the condolences of the Republic of Senegal to Turkey following the terrorist attack that struck that brotherly country yesterday.

Senegal would also like to commend the efforts of the penholder of resolution 2295 (2016). We welcome and thank Foreign Minister Abdoulaye Diop's for participating in today's meeting.

Senegal co-sponsored and voted in favour of the resolution, as we are convinced that through it the Security Council is giving the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) a much more robust and effective mandate, in line with the wish that was clearly expressed by the States members of the Economic Community of West African States at the summit meeting held in Dakar on 4 June 2016. The Council gives MINUSMA the means to provide all necessary support to the Government of Mali in its efforts to re-establish its sovereignty throughout its territory and also in its efforts to deal with the asymmetric threats the country is facing. That is why my Government would like to thank all Council members for their cooperation, which has made it possible to produce this resolution. Senegal would also like to take this opportunity to reaffirm its full support for Mali's territorial integrity and sovereignty over its entire territory.

Senegal would also like to express its full support for the efforts of the Armed Forces of Mali to re-establish the country's sovereignty over its entire territory and combat the terrorist groups that pose a threat to all countries in the region. We therefore welcome the efforts of the Malian Government to implement the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, and take this opportunity to call on the parties to be more committed to the implementation of the agreement, particularly by providing the necessary information on cantonment and joint patrols.

Senegal remains committed and will spare no effort, as it has done until now, making every contribution to the effort to restore security and stability to this country, which is our neighbour, brethren and friend. That explains the additional effort provided by my country through the redeployment of the quick reaction force. I take this opportunity to once again call on the Security Council and the international community as a whole to spare no effort in continuing to guarantee its full support to Mali, which is in need of that support in this particularly critical period, during which it is coping with extremely serious threats that imperil not only Mali but the entire region and the world.

Mr. Bessho (Japan): Japan welcomes the unanimous adoption of resolution 2295 (2016). I would like to thank France for taking the lead in preparing this resolution. Japan is pleased to have cosponsored the resolution. One year has passed since the signing of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. Japan commends all the Malian signatories, who remain committed to implementing the agreement. We must not lose momentum. In that regard, it is crucial for all Malian parties to accelerate the implementation of the agreement with renewed determination, so as not to allow spoilers to jeopardize the peace process.

Together with international partners, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) continues to support Mali in that process. As a bilateral partner, Japan also provides assistance to Mali to build the capacities of its security sector and to spread the dividends of peace throughout the entire population. Above all, allow me to underscore the fact that the principal actors in the implementation of the peace agreement are the Malians themselves. Two weeks ago, the Prime Minister of Mali, His Excellency Mr. Modibo Keita, reaffirmed before the Council that his Government was determined to expedite the successful implementation of the agreement (see S/PV.7719). Japan looks forward to the strong leadership of the Government of Mali.

Finally, Japan pays tribute to MINUSMA personnel, who work every day in severe security conditions. I would like to express my sincere condolences to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Resolution 2295 (2016) increases the authorized number of MINUSMA troops by 20 per cent and clarifies its mandate to ensure the security of personnel. Japan strongly hopes that these measures will bring tangible results in improving the mission's security and its capacity to implement its mandate on the ground. Japan reiterates its full support for MINUSMA and for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): I would like to begin by expressing the United States' deepest condolences to the victims and the families of those killed in the heinous terrorist attack at Istanbul's international airport yesterday. We remain steadfast in our support for Turkey and all of our friends and allies as we continue to confront the scourge and threat of terrorism. The United States welcomes the Security Council's unanimous vote today to extend the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) for an additional year. This decision comes at a critical time in Mali's history and for the future of United Nations peacekeeping.

Over the past year alone in Mali, 27 MINUSMA peacekeepers have been killed. Over the past year alone, 112 have been wounded. Ten of those attacks used improvised explosive devices that targeted MINUSMA convoys. United Nations peacekeepers are increasingly being called upon to fulfil complex mandates in dangerous environments that include asymmetric threats. This requires more prompt, effective and agile responses by the United Nations system and Member States deploying or providing capabilities to successfully operate in such environments. It also requires clarity from the Security Council.

In light of the volatile security situation, particularly in central and northern Mali, the Security Council's decision to reinforce the mission's vital protection of civilians and stabilization mandate should help to rationalize the mission's posture with the prevailing security environment. The Security Council is also requesting that the Secretary-General enhance MINUSMA cooperation with regional security initiatives, such as the Sahel Group of Five, so that the Mission has greater awareness of the broader regional security dynamics in which it operates.

The Security Council took an important step today by reconciling the current MINUSMA mandate with its security environment and by calling on the Secretary-General and Member States to urgently give MINUSMA the capabilities it needs to enable the Mission's more mobile, proactive and robust posture in pursuit of its mandate. The resolution emphasizes that MINUSMA must anticipate, deter and counter threats, including asymmetric threats, to protect civilians and United Nations personnel. This means that MINUSMA must take robust and active steps, including direct operations if necessary, against serious and credible threats.

When MINUSMA is attacked or threatened as it carries out its mandate, MINUSMA is expected to act, and we are expected to ensure that MINUSMA has the ability to do so effectively. This is not ambiguous, as some have suggested; it is rational, and it is necessary when a mission is deployed in this kind of environment. It is a critical step forward for this peacekeeping mission.

Today, the Security Council also affirmed that the gradual restoration and extension of State authority across Mali — and particularly the reformed and reconstituted Malian defence and security forces — would contribute to the stability that all Malians seek. This would also help to deter the terrorist threat, which continues to claim the lives of Malian security forces and those supporting the Malian people, namely, the French forces and MINUSMA peacekeepers, to achieve the peace they have so long desired. We certainly pay tribute to their sacrifices in Mali.

The Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali was signed over a year ago, and yet today it remains largely unimplemented. Failure to move forward and to take the political risks necessary for the greater good of Mali's enduring peace creates openings for spoilers and for terrorists. While the United States is encouraged by the recent agreement among the signatories on the interim authorities, as well as by President Keita's decision to appoint a high-level representative on implementation, we continue to urge — as resolution 2295 (2016) rightly underscores — that all the signatories immediately implement the broad range of institutional, security, development and defence provisions of the agreement. Too much time has passed, patience is wearing thin, political will is dissipating and implementation is urgently necessary.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): New Zealand welcomes today's unanimous adoption of resolution 2295 (2016) and thanks the French delegation in particular for the continuing leadership it has shown on Mali, in close consultation with the African members of the Council.

We support a mandate for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) that enables troops to take robust action to defend themselves and protect civilians in a security environment characterized by asymmetric threats. The losses taken by MINUSMA over the past year have already been graphically referred to by others. We agree that troops should be enabled to undertake proactive defence by taking action to address threats to civilians and United Nations personnel in their area of operation.

We pay tribute to the high number of peacekeepers who have risked their lives and in all too many cases lost their lives in Mali. We continue to be concerned at the lack of key capabilities of the Mission to enable it to effectively carry out its mandate. We support the intent to send a clear message about how we expect the mandate to be carried out. We wish to reiterate New Zealand's view that this mandate clarifies MINUSMA's mandate and does not broaden the Mission's authorizations specifically by granting any ability to engage pre-emptively in counter-terrorism activities.

In our view, the mandate was not really the problem that needed addressing in this case. The powers of MINUSMA are clearly stated in paragraph 17: the words "all necessary means" should mean what they say. Adding complicated language around complex operational issues, such as force posture, risks exacerbating the problem of less clear mandates and may raise unhelpful implications for other mandates. As noted in the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (S/2015/446), United Nations missions currently have significant shortcomings that make them poorly suited to such rolls. Mandating such tasks to any mission would require a much greater degree of consideration and discussion in the Council.

We welcome the inclusive approach taken in the lead-up to the adoption of the resolution, and we particularly welcome the engagement with troop-contributing countries and the opportunity to discuss the situation in Mali with the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister in the informal interactive dialogue with the Council on 16 June.

Mr. De la Calle García (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain welcomes the adoption of resolution 2295 (2016), which it co-sponsored. The resolution is the Security Council's response to the unanimous request received from the Government, the signatory parties of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, civil society, troop-contributing countries and the political stakeholders during the Council's visit to Mali in March. It is a request for the strengthening of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

In this resolution, the Security Council has tried to define an appropriate framework and authorization of force in a peacekeeping operation in a climate of asymmetric attacks. Blue Helmets will now be able to carry out operations to anticipate, deter and combat asymmetric threats against civilians in legitimate defence and in defence of their mandate. This is an important step. It demonstrates the Council's commitment to peace in Mali. It is also an acknowledgement of troop-contributing countries, whose men and women risk their lives and who now have a mandate that will put them in a better position to act in an extremely hostile environment.

However, the resolution is not the end, but rather the beginning of what should be a new chapter. If we want to be successful, this mandate should be accompanied by a significant strengthening of the capacity and equipment of the Mission; in particular, however, it is essential for the parties to accelerate the implementation of the Peace Agreement, which we continue to consider the best opportunity for Mali to achieve peace and security in a lasting way.

Finally, I would like to thank France for its leadership and efficiency in helping the Council reach an agreement on such a solid text. We would also like to highlight the importance we attach to the inclusion of a focus on women and peace and security in a crosscutting way throughout the text. That inclusion fulfils the promise that the Council members made to the Malian women's organizations that we interviewed in March.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): Like others, allow me to begin by expressing my sincere condolences to the Government and people of Turkey for the appalling attack on Istanbul International Airport.

Very briefly, with regard to Mali, I welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2295 (2016). It provides the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) with the capabilities and terms to carry out its mission successfully. As well as providing additional troops, the resolution clearly states that peacekeepers will take robust action to defend themselves against attacks from groups that are intent on disrupting the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. Therefore, this mandate strengthens MINUSMA's ability to tackle asymmetrical threats, for example by providing an enhanced intelligence capability for the Mission. The mandate is fully in line with the principles of peacekeeping. The Mission is authorized to take action in self-defence and in defence of the mandate.

I pay tribute to the peacekeepers risking their lives in Mali. This mandate demonstrates the shared commitment of the Council to help create a more stable and secure Mali. The Government of Mali and northern signatory groups must now use this opportunity to implement the terms of the Peace Agreement without delay.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of France.

I would like to begin by extending France's condolences to and solidarity with Turkey after the terrible attack that took place in Istanbul yesterday, which we vigorously condemn.

By adopting resolution 2295 (2016) today, the Security Council has decided to move in two major directions. First, the Security Council requests the Malian Government and the signatory armed groups to accelerate the practical implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. The Government and the signatory armed groups are now engaged in a race against time against the terrorists who want to derail the peace process. The signatory parties have a historical responsibility to come to an agreement to finally provide the people, especially in the north, with the dividends of peace. Through resolution 2295 (2016), the Security Council has set a strategic priority for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) of supporting the implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially the restoration of State authority throughout the entire territory of Mali.

The Security Council strengthens MINUSMA to enable it to adapt to its unique security environment. The Security Council has heard the urgent request made by the Malian President and the Heads of State of West African States, whose soldiers are risking their lives as peacekeepers in Mali. MINUSMA is addressing the threat of terrorist groups. This is an exceptional environment for a United Nations peacekeeping operation, and we are aware of that. In that regard, I reiterate our condolences for all those who have given their lives in their commitment to MINUSMA.

Through resolution 2295 (2016), we have decided to provide MINUSMA with all means necessary to enable it to adapt to this environment. The protection of civilians and the safety of the peacekeepers in Mali is our top priority. More specifically, the Security Council is strengthening MINUSMA on two levels. First of all, with respect to the means at its disposal, we have decided to deploy 2,500 additional troops and police within MINUSMA. This major increase in the force will make it possible to deploy specialized European military units. The Security Council also asks for a reinforcement of MINUSMA's contingent-owned equipment, including medical evacuation helicopters, drones and armoured vehicles. It is crucial that countries with those capabilities respond to that appeal. With regard to its mandate, through resolution 2295 (2016) the Security Council has given MINUSMA the most robust mandate possible in a terrorist environment. It authorizes MINUSMA to use all necessary means to prevent and counter asymmetric threats to civilians and peacekeepers themselves.

By adopting resolution 2295 (2016), the Security Council is fully exercising its responsibility for international peace and security. The Security Council is assuming its responsibility by reminding the people of Mali that it stands alongside them on the path to peace. The Security Council has supported Mali, whose very existence was threatened, since the beginning of the crisis in 2012. It will continue to do so until the Malians can permanently live in peace.

The Security Council has assumed its responsibility by giving the peacekeepers all the means to fulfil their noble and essential mission under the most difficult conditions. Thanks to MINUSMA, the Security Council has helped peacekeeping to evolve on the ground. France has an ambition and hope for the United Nations — France wants the United Nations to protect civilians wherever they are threatened.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to Mr. Diop.

Mr. Diop (Mali) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I take this opportunity to express the condolences and solidarity of the Government of Mali to the Government and the people of Turkey, a brotherly and friendly country, following the deadly attack in Istanbul yesterday. I also extend wishes for a speedy recovery to all the wounded, and reiterate the firm condemnation of the Government of Mali of such terrorist attacks.

My schedule does not allow me to attend this meeting in person at this historic adoption of resolution 2295 (2016), which renews the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). The adoption of the resolution is a vital issue for Mali, as expressed by the Prime Minister and Head of Government, Mr. Modibo Keita on 16 June (see S/PV.7719) on the occasion of the consideration of the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Mali (S/2016/498).

In his address to the Security Council and during the Council's spirited debate, Mr. Keita recalled the expectations of Mali and the tremendous hope that the people and Government of Mali pinned on MINUSMA's future mandate. These expectations consist of a more robust and proactive MINUSMA mandate, with strengthened operational capacities and adequate equipment; increased support to the armed and security forces of Mali, which, I recall, are on the front lines of this fight, as well as operational coordination with international forces; and support for regional counter-terrorism initiatives, including those of the Sahel Group of Five (G-5 Sahel), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union.

The Government of Mali is pleased to note the unanimous adoption of resolution 2295 (2016), extending the mandate of MINUSMA until 30 June 2017. I thank all Council members for the consensus reached regarding my country. The new MINUSMA mandate incorporates the expectations of the Government of Mali, providing innovations that will enable the Mission to fully accomplish its mandate and assume its role in supporting the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali and all stabilization efforts within Mali, to which Council members have contributed significantly.

We all know that this new strengthened and robust mandate provides the Mission with the means to fulfil its mandate in an environment of exceptional security challenges, characterized by asymmetric attacks. Mali welcomes the adoption of the resolution, whose strategic objective remains the restoration of State authority throughout our national territory, particularly in the northern regions affected by the crisis.

I should like, on behalf of the people and Government of Mali, to extend to all States members of the Security Council our heartfelt gratitude not only for this historic act, but also for the important progress which its adoption represents and above all for sending a strong signal to all the enemies of peace that the United Nations, Mali and the forces of peace will not roll over and will respond in kind in order to continue along the path for peace.

In this regard, I commend the courage and sense of responsibility of the Security Council, which continues to fully assume all its responsibilities in meeting threats to peace, security and international stability. On behalf of Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of the Republic of Mali, I should like to express our appreciation to President François Hollande and France, in its capacity as President of the Security Council, for their unwavering commitment to Mali and their efforts to promote peace and stability in the Sahel. The gratitude and deep appreciation of Mali also go to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and our brother, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mahamat Saleh Annadif, for their tireless efforts on behalf of peace and stabilization of our country.

I would be remiss if I did not thank Algeria, Chairman of the Monitoring Committee for the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali , ECOWAS, the African Union, the countries of the G-5 Sahel, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the European Union, the United States of America and all troop-contributing countries for supporting the necessary adaptation of MINUSMA's new mandate to the security environment in which it operates. I am also duty-bound to honour the memory of all the Blue Helmets who have lost their lives in Mali, and recognize all the sacrifices that have been made for the stability of my country.

I conclude by reiterating the firm commitment and determination of the President of the Republic of Mali, Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, to make every effort to

expedite the full implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, the outcome of the Algiers process. The Government of Mali has played and will continue to play its part, and with the help of the Council, will assume its full responsibilities in bringing peace and stability to Mali, to the benefit of all its citizens.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.